



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

TRADE/WP.6/2005/13  
15 August 2005

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation  
and Standardization Policies

Fifteenth session, 24-26 October 2005

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

**WP.6 VISION, STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR 2006 - 2010,  
AND WORK PLAN FOR 2006 - 2007**

This document presents the Working Party's general strategy for 2006-2010 and outlines its work plan for 2006-2007. At its annual sessions, the Working Party will decide on the details of the work items.

The paper was prepared by the Bureau of the Working Party, and the secretariat, and is presented discussion and approval.

**Suggested ranking of priorities, 2006 – 2007**

Higher	National practices and transnational cooperation in the area of technical regulation Market Surveillance
Lower	Metrology
Medium	All other programme elements

*Many countries will remain on the periphery of the European and the global economy. These include countries of the former Soviet Union and of Southeast Europe, as well as most of the developing countries. One of the principal objectives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is to help the countries become better integrated into these larger economic frameworks. For instance, UNECE provides or supports capacity-building workshops and training in good practices and governance in various subjects. These are particularly important in the areas of regulatory harmonization and standardization as they help create tools for preventing technical barriers to trade, as well as contribute to regional trade and economies integration.*

*UNECE's Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies comprises between 50 and 70 specialists from all over the world. The group's major concern is to encourage all 55 UNECE member countries to develop, adopt and apply harmonized technical regulations and standards, as well as conformity assessment procedures. Its main objectives are the safeguard of public health and safety, improvement of the environment, promotion of scientific and technological cooperation, and the removal of technical barriers to international trade resulting from disparate standards and technical regulations and their application.*

## **I. OUR VISION**

1. Our vision is to achieve a predictable, transparent and harmonized regulatory environment for commerce and business both nationally and globally.

## **II. OUR MISSION**

2. Our mission is to improve the current legal, regulatory and administrative framework to enable business in countries irrespective of their level of development to exchange safe and reliable products and services without encountering unnecessary trade obstacles or restrictions.

3. Our work fully supports the United Nations Millennium Development Goals to further develop “an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system” and “to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty”, and to help integrate sustainable development principles in national policies (<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>).

4. We aim to facilitate trade and market access through:

- Stimulating a dialogue on regulatory cooperation and convergence
- Encouraging the participation of all countries in international standardization
- Promoting the use of international standards in trade and in the economy.

5. We also aim to promote trade, industrial development and enterprise development by:
  - Encouraging the international harmonization of standards and technical regulations
  - Removing or reducing technical barriers to trade
  - Encouraging scientific and technological cooperation by developing policies for standardization and related activities.
6. We draw up recommendation and good practices, and our recommendations are increasingly receiving global recognition.
7. As UNECE enjoys observer status with the World Trade Organization (WTO) Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade, we can continue to provide up-to-date information on current developments in the WTO to all national standards bodies participating in the Working Party, especially those of countries currently in accession to the WTO.

### **III. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS, 2006 -2010**

8. In the period 2006-2010, we will::
  - Identify least trade-restrictive means for regulatory and standardization action relating to products trade in member countries
  - Exchange experience and share information on developments in regulatory and standardization policies relevant to member States
  - Review current recommendations and develop new ones to promote good standardization and regulatory practices and approaches
  - Promote national implementation of the recommendations, providing capacity-building to countries, as necessary
  - Promote the exchange of experience on regulatory approaches and policies for consumer/user and environmental protection
  - Strengthen partnerships with the private sector and civil society in pursuit of development and poverty eradication
  - Liaise with other organizations and agencies.
9. We will use our “ECE Regulatory and Standardization List” of sectors and product areas of interest to member countries (ECE/STAND/20/Rev.5) to identify sectors and areas where Governments see the need for further work on international standards and are interested in regulatory cooperation dialogue. We will revise our recommendations to take stock of latest developments, and draw up new recommendations in areas proposed by our member countries.
10. Should we so decide at our fifteenth session, in October 2005, we will proceed to draw up a recommendation on market surveillance practices.

11. Countries in transition and developing countries have requested our advice and assistance in implementing standards-receptive regulatory regimes in different areas and sectors. On the basis of our Recommendation “L” on and “International Model for Technical Harmonization” (the text can be found in English, French and Russian on the following webpage [http://www.unece.org/trade/ctied/wp6/major\\_doc.htm](http://www.unece.org/trade/ctied/wp6/major_doc.htm)) and in cooperation with interested Governments and agencies, we will put in place programmes of assistance, and ensure that related experience is widely disseminated.

12. We will continue to collect and disseminate information on good practices in regulatory areas and market surveillance and consumer protection, and draw up recommendations for the use of regulators and other stakeholders to help them to promote efficiency in their operations while ensuring a minimum of trade-restrictive effects.

13. We will also continue to work with the private sector and non-governmental organizations, drawing their concerns to the attention of Governments; and will work on regulatory and other initiatives from industry, supporting market-based projects.

14. We will further continue to cooperate with a wide number of organizations on an international, regional and national level, including organizations from the United Nations family as well as the groupings such as the Commonwealth of Independent States. We will also explore the interest of the regional commissions of the United Nations and other regional groupings in imitating joint projects in their regions, beginning with Africa and Asia.

#### **IV. WORK PLAN, 2006 -2007**

##### **A. TECHNICAL REGULATION AND STANDARDIZATION**

###### **International standardization and definitions of terms**

###### Objectives

- To review on a regular basis standardization-related international, regional and national issues pursued by member Governments and international, regional and national standardizing organizations
- To facilitate national practices for implementing standards
- To provide technical assistance and training
- To keep up to date the “ECE Regulatory and Standardization List” of sectors and product areas of interest to member countries, and the criteria according to which the List was drawn up.

###### Work to be undertaken

To continue to provide a forum for exchanging information and experiences on issues of concern to UNECE and United Nations member countries, international and regional organizations, and representatives of business and civil society.

To continue to collect information on the participation of member State public authorities in international standardization activities related to environmental protection and management, and on the extent of countries' progress in adopting and transposing the resulting standards. (We will place this information in a special subsection of our website.)

To complete the sixth revision of the "ECE Regulatory and Standardization List" based on an ongoing dialogue with member countries and international standardization organizations.

To explore the interest of other United Nations regional commissions in using the principles and criteria laid down in the List for identifying the interest of their member countries in standardization and regulatory cooperation.

To take account of the new definitions by the International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission relating to the field of conformity assessment and to prepare a proposal for a complementary recommendation to Recommendation ("J") on "Definitions" as contained in the UNECE publication Recommendations on Standardization Policies (ECE/STAND/17/Rev.4).

### **National practices and transnational cooperation in technical regulation**

#### Objectives

- To review on a regular basis issues related to national practices and transnational cooperation in technical regulations within the UNECE region
- To facilitate good regulatory practice and regulatory cooperation
- To provide technical assistance and training
- To update existing recommendations and prepare new ones to respond to needs of member countries for regulatory cooperation and related activities.

#### Work to be undertaken, 2006 – 2007

To continue to provide a forum for the exchange of information and experiences on issues of concern to UNECE member countries, other United Nations member countries, international and regional organizations, representatives of business and civil society in the area of technical regulation.

To revise Recommendation "D" on "Reference to Standards", as contained in the UNECE publication Recommendations on Standardization Policies.

To continue to collect information on national horizontal legislation, structures and practices and to post this information on a special subsection of the website.

To continue to pursue sectoral initiatives in the areas of telecom and earth-moving machinery according to the “International Model for Technical Harmonization”.

To support new sectoral or regional initiatives for projects using the mechanisms and principles of the “International Model”, in cooperation with interested Governments, international organizations and private operators.

To receive, evaluate and, when appropriate and financially possible, respond to requests for training and capacity-building from interested countries and organizations both from the UNECE and from other regions interested in the Working Party’s activities on promoting good regulatory practices and regulatory cooperation and to continue working with donors to obtain extrabudgetary means for financing such projects.

To organize in 2006 an “International Forum on Regulatory Cooperation and Related International Standardization Matters” in conjunction with the annual session of the UNECE Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development.

## **B. CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT**

### Objectives

- To review and promote harmonized international conformity-assessment principles and practices and international arrangements for the acceptance of conformity-assessment results
- To regularly review trade-related work on conformity assessment in other international and regional organizations.

### Work to be undertaken, 2006 - 2007

To continue to provide a forum for the exchange of information and experience on conformity-assessment issues of concern to UNECE member countries, other United Nations member countries, international and regional organizations, and representatives of business and civil society.

To review standardization and conformity-related quality and environmental policy issues, including national quality policies, eco-labelling and the use of management standards and systems (e.g. ISO 9000 and 14000), with particular reference to the needs of business operators in transition economies.

To consider the use of ISO 9001:2000 in public administration.

To gather information and analyse government mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) entered into by UNECE member countries.

To respond to requests for technical assistance and training on national conformity-assessment and accreditation systems, with special emphasis on problems in countries in transition.

### **C. MARKET SURVEILLANCE**

#### Objectives

- To review and exchange information on national market-surveillance practices in UNECE member countries
- To promote guidance on good practices, including institutional frameworks, ensuring implementation of the related United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection as set out in General Assembly decision 54/449 of 22 December 1999.

#### Work to be undertaken (2006 – 2007)

To carry out any follow-up to the International Forum on market surveillance and consumer/user protection in October 2005 that may be decided on by the Working Party at its fifteenth session.

To consider preparing guidelines on good practices in market surveillance activities, following proposals by its subsidiary body in this area (the “MARS” Group).

### **D. METROLOGY**

#### Objective

- To consider possible ways of establishing criteria for metrological procedures and harmonized recalibration requirements.

#### Work to be undertaken (2006 – 2007)

To continue providing a discussion forum for metrology issues of concern, with special emphasis on countries in transition.

To maintain contact with interested UNECE member countries and metrology organizations (e.g. International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) and Euro-Asian Cooperation of State Metrology Institutions (COOMET)) to explore their interest in developing a new recommendation on guidelines for the methodology for measuring procedures.

---